What is Toastmasters?

From a humble beginning in 1924 at the YMCA in Santa Ana, California, Toastmasters International has grown to become a world leader in helping people become more competent and comfortable in front of an audience. The nonprofit organization now has nearly 235,000 members in 11,700 clubs in 92 countries, offering a proven – and enjoyable! – way to practice and hone communication and leadership skills.  
  
Most Toastmasters meetings are comprised of approximately 20 people who meet weekly for an hour or two. Participants practice and learn skills by filling a meeting role, ranging from giving a prepared speech or an impromptu one to serving as timer, evaluator or grammarian.  
  
There is no instructor; instead, each speech and meeting is critiqued by a member in a positive manner, focusing on what was done right and what could be improved.   
  
Good communicators tend to be good leaders. Some well-known Toastmasters alumni include:

**Peter Coors** of Coors Brewing Company

         **Debbi Fields**, founder of Mrs. Fields Cookies

         **Tom Peters**, management expert and author

         **Linda Lingle**, Governor of Hawaii

        More than four million people have discovered the benefits of this proven learning formula. Thousands of corporations sponsor in-house Toastmasters clubs. Businesses and government organizations have discovered that Toastmasters is an effective, cost-efficient means of meeting their communication training needs. Toastmasters groups can also be found in governmental agencies, as well as in a variety of community organizations, prisons, universities, hospitals, military bases and churches.

The Shippensburg University Toastmasters are currently in the process of forming on campus.

This student organization is different from any other.

More than a social club, yet not directly tied to any one academic area, Toastmasters will assist students both in their academic and professional careers. Toastmasters will assist you regardless of your major, as public speaking skills are essential in all areas. Meetings will take place weekly, with the regular time and day to be determined by our membership.

Since we are still forming this is not only your invitation to join a dynamic organization that will aid you, but also an invitation for those interested in accepting leadership roles with the club to let their intentions be known. Currently we still need two Vice-Presidents (Education and Public Relations), and a Treasurer; ideally, we will also be able to fill the role of Sergeant-at-Arms as well.

Why Join?

Survey after survey shows that presentation skills are crucial to success in the workplace. Many people pay high fees for seminars to gain the skill and confidence necessary to face an audience. Toastmasters provides an option that is less expensive and held in high regard in business circles. This organization has been around for more than 84 years and offers a proven – and enjoyable – way to practice and hone communication and leadership skills.

**You will…**

         Learn to communicate more effectively

         Become a better listener.

         Improve your presentation skills

         Increase your leadership potential

         Become more successful in your career

         Build your ability to motivate and persuade

         Reach your professional and personal goals

         Increase your self confidence.

**How you do it. . .**

         Build speaking and leadership skills with **time-tested methods**

         Focus on areas of interest in our **self-paced curriculum**

         Receive suggestions for improvement through **constructive evaluations**

**Toastmasters programs are . . .**

         Inexpensive

         Interactive

         Convenient

         Friendly

         Supportive

**Toastmasters makes learning fun!**  
  
This non-profit organization offers a proven – and enjoyable – way to practice communication and leadership skills. Here's how it works:

         **A Toastmasters meeting is a learn-by-doing workshop**in which participants hone their speaking and leadership skills in a friendly atmosphere. A typical group has 20 to 40 members who meet weekly or biweekly to practice public speaking techniques. The average meeting lasts one hour.

         **Members learn communication skills**by working in the *Competent Communication* manual, a series of 10 self-paced speaking assignments designed to instill a basic foundation in public speaking. Participants learn skills related to use of humor, gestures, eye contact, speech organization and overall delivery. When finished with this manual, members are recognized for their accomplishment by receiving their Competent Communicator Award, and if desired a letter sent to their employer. Members can then choose from 15 advanced manuals to learn skills related to specific interests, and continue to develop their skills receiving additional recognition for their accomplishments.

         **Members also learn leadership skills**by taking on various meeting roles and serving as officers at the club and district levels, and by working in the *Competent Leadership* manual and the *High Performance Leadership* program. In our learn-by-doing approach, we don't lecture our members about leadership skills; we give them responsibilities and ask them to lead.

         **There is no instructor in a Toastmasters meeting.**Instead, members evaluate one another’s presentations. This feedback process is a key part of the program’s success. Meeting participants also give impromptu talks on assigned topics, conduct meetings, serve as officers in various leadership roles and learn rules related to timing, grammar and parliamentary procedure.

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